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ABSTRACT

Prepared as part of a comprehensive study of reading in Virginia, this report contains the findings of 18 research studies. After a discussion of the findings, several recommendations are presented. Among these recommendations are: students in English as a second language programs should be placed with peer groups rather than according to English reading achievement level, curricula should be expanded to include psychomotor objectives, class sizes should be reduced, and the number of secondary schools offering reading instruction should be increased. The report concludes that reading continues to be an area of major concern in Virginia schools. (Abstracts of the 18 research studies and a table of data are appended.) (FL)

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THE STATE OF THE ART OF READING IN VIRGINIA

A PAPER PREPARED
FOR THE RIGHT TO READ EFFORT
STATE OF VIRGINIA

CS804727

State Department of Education • Richmond, Virginia 23216 • May 1976

FOREWORD

Virginia has joined the ranks of Right To Read states in a nationwide effort to eliminate illiteracy in the United States. To achieve this goal in Virginia, a comprehensive picture of the state of the art of reading is needed. The findings presented in this report represent an endeavor to determine what is known about reading in Virginia and to identify areas which require further inquiry.

Sincere appreciation is expressed to members of the State Agency Task Force for their efforts in searching diligently for the data upon which this report has been based. The task force is composed of representatives of the following divisions and programs within the Virginia State Department of Education:

Division of Educational Research and Statistics
Division of Elementary Education
Division of Secondary Education, Adult Education Service
Division of Secondary Education, English Service
Division of Special Education
Division of Teacher Education and Certification
Division of Vocational Education
Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title I
Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Titles III and IV-C
Program Evaluation

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Director
Virginia Right To Read

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Virginia is a Right To Read State! As such, the state has made a public commitment to give reading the highest priority and to concentrate funds, personnel, and efforts to further the Right To Read for persons of all ages within the Commonwealth.

The goal of the Right To Read effort is to eliminate illiteracy in Virginia by 1980. To accomplish this goal, the Right To Read effort has a dual objective: to assure reading achievement for public school students and adults at a level necessary for survival in our society.

What is meant by the term "to eliminate illiteracy?" It means assuring that all persons will be able to perform those reading tasks which they need if they are to be effective citizens. How many illiterates are there in Virginia? Who and where are they? How do we begin to identify illiterates and to help them? These are only a few of the many questions that arise as Virginians consider the Right To Read effort and assume their responsibilities toward meeting its goal.

To answer the preceding and other questions, a comprehensive survey of the state of the art of reading in Virginia is needed to describe what has been done and what remains to be accomplished. A planned approach to solving the problem of illiteracy requires a number of well-organized activities based upon sound data. To facilitate and implement the program, a director has been designated and a task force and an advisory committee have been appointed.

The State Right To Read Task Force, composed of representatives of the divisions in the State Department of Education, became operative during August, 1975. The task force was established to take all necessary steps to plan and implement the Right To Read project and to insure effective coordination of activities of the State Department of Education which pertain to reading. Task force members were requested to locate research data, reports, and other information which would contribute to a comprehensive picture of the art of reading in the state. This paper presents the major findings of the data that were collected. Abstracts of individual reports upon which this paper is based are attached.

Much data on the reading achievement of elementary school children has been generated through ESEA Title I and Title III projects. Information about the reading achievement of secondary school students has been derived from local reading programs and from vocational education programs. Reading achievement also is reflected in Standardized Testing Program scores for grades 4, 6, 8, and 11. Reading achievement test results were reviewed for the period 1970-75. Average reading scores for the fourth-grade have clustered around the 50th percentile (average for the nation), while sixth-grade percentile equivalents have moved upward from the 42nd percentile in 1972 to the 48th percentile in 1974. In 1974 the eighth-grade average reading score was at the

42nd percentile level, and the eleventh-grade average score was at the 47th percentile level. The Testing Service of the State Department of Education has indicated that during the five years reported the fluctuations in reading scores generally have been insignificant. Except for the eighth-grade, the reading achievement of Virginia students is equivalent to the national average. Equally important is the fact that the tests show that the achievement of Virginia's students is commensurate with their ability.

At the secondary school level, State test results for 1974-75 disclosed that 33.1 percent of the students in grade 8 and 31.8 percent of those in grade 11 (total 50,026) were reading two or more grade levels below their grade placement. This does not mean, however, that approximately 50,000 students in grades 8 and 11 are illiterate. An eleventh-grade student could be below grade level in reading and yet be able to read at a level necessary to perform certain survival tasks, such as writing checks, filing income tax returns, passing a test for a driver's license, using the telephone directory, and reading the newspaper.

A second report on the secondary school level deals with results of an an informal assessment of vocational education students. In 1974 there were 284,358 students enrolled in public school vocational education programs in Virginia. Of this number, 24,104 were in special programs for students who could not develop job-entry skills in regular vocational education programs, and 3,661 were in special programs for educable mentally retarded students. The number of students enrolled in vocational education programs who have serious reading problems that interfere with their occupational preparation programs ranges from 94,000 to 142,000. In round figures, it may be concluded that from 8 to 12 percent of the total State school population (1,123,426 in 1974) had difficulty reading job-related materials.

A study reporting the reading achievement levels of elementary and secondary school students was submitted by the State Rehabilitative School Authority. Reading scores of youth and adult offenders (ages 11-17) confined in Virginia correctional institutions during 1973-74, indicated that 77 to 90 percent of them performed one or more years below grade level in reading. The study showed that the older the students are the further behind they tend to be. By the time they are 17 or older, they are as much as five years below expected grade placement at the time they are committed. The 1974-75 report noted that all students committed read below acceptable performance levels.

What of the adult population? Although precise data concerning the extent of illiteracy among adults in the state are not available, some inferences can be made. A report submitted by the Adult Education Service, State Department of Education, compared the educational attain-

ment of the total population 25 years and older in 1960 with attainment a decade later in 1970. The percentage of the total population completing no schooling dropped from 2.7 percent in 1960 to 1.6 percent in 1970. The percentage of total population completing 1 to 4 years of schooling dropped from 10.5 percent in 1960 to 6.0 percent in 1970. It is estimated that one adult in every 20 may be a functional illiterate.

A second report by the Adult Education Service dealt with enrollment of adults in reading skills courses by grade levels (grades 1-4 and 5-8) for a five-year period, 1971-75. The number of persons completing Level 1 (grades 1-4) increased from 1,170 in 1971 to 1,661 in 1975, and the number of persons completing Level 2 (grades 5-8) increased from 1,467 in 1971 to 4,191 in 1975. The report stated that reading skills programs are a predominant element of the adult basic education program for Level 1. Therefore, it can be assumed that those persons who have completed this level may have learned to read for the first time and have improved their reading skills by one or more grade levels.

The Virginia Educational Needs Assessment is a comprehensive study for determining learner needs in all regions of the state. An assessment of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains was carried out in two phases. The major purpose of the assessment was to identify learner-oriented needs. The results of the study provide a comprehensive analysis of Virginia student needs and furnish answers to some questions regarding non-achieving students. Findings to date show that reading continues to be a curriculum area of major concern. There is indication that no region or school division in the state is totally without needs at the learner level.

Besides the data already presented, it is appropriate to consider the findings of studies which have sought to determine the effectiveness of different approaches to reading instruction. Under the auspices of the Division of Educational Research and Statistics, State Department of Education, four research studies were conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of certain instructional methodology. Findings of the four studies indicate: (1) Commercially prepared materials appear to be an effective aid in reading instruction; however, they do not insure an adequate reading readiness program for pupils in grade 1. (2) Research results were not sufficiently convincing to recommend that Latin instruction be given in elementary schools for the express purpose of increasing the English reading skills of students. (3) An appropriate attitude toward reading is not a significant factor in reading achievement among upper elementary school students. (4) Evidence indicates that serious reading deficiencies can be corrected when seven important conditions are met by schools. They are:

Firm commitment by the school administration to the importance of correcting reading deficiencies and an administrative arrangement which will accomplish this;
Assignment of competent teachers who are committed to the improvement of reading;
Sufficient time for reading instruction;
A variety of reading materials appropriate for the students' instructional reading levels;
A variety of reading materials appropriate for the students' independent reading levels;
A classroom climate which stimulates interest in reading;
Parental involvement in the improvement of reading.

The State Department of Education has made considerable effort during recent years to improve reading instruction in the public schools. These efforts include: (1) Revising teacher certification regulations to include reading specialists and teachers of reading; (2) An annual reading conference for teachers; (3) Assisting with the Governor's Conference on Reading and seven follow-up regional conferences; (4) Publishing an elementary school Language Arts Guide with major emphasis on reading; (5) Planning and implementing an individualized reading program for selected underachievers in grades 5 and 6; and (6) Participating in the national Right To Read program.

With the influx of foreign-speaking students into Virginia, 12 school divisions currently provide *English As a Second Language* programs. The Foreign Language Service, State Department of Education, reports that foreign-speaking students experience problems in learning to read English only if they have had reading problems in their native language.

When students move from elementary to secondary schools, it is frequently assumed that they are competent readers. As shown by the report on the reading problems of students enrolled in vocational education, it is obvious that many students do not achieve needed reading skills during the elementary school years. Consequently, a sizeable number of secondary schools in the state offer reading courses. A survey conducted by the English Service of the State Department of Education in 1974-75 revealed, however, that only approximately 5 percent of the high school population is enrolled in these reading courses. Eleven percent of the high schools surveyed offered developmental reading courses in grades 8-12. Twenty-six percent offered remedial reading classes in grades 8-12. Thirty-six percent offered reading improvement courses.

Federal programs for reading are centered largely in the lower grades in elementary schools. During 1968-69 through 1971-72, the results of reading achievement tests in 10 school divisions were analyzed and it

was found that the average gain per month was 1.17 months. The expected gain was one month for each month of schooling. Students in Title I, ESEA, reading programs showed gains which were slightly in excess of those anticipated. This fact is particularly significant because students in Title I programs are educationally deprived and usually function one year or more behind their peers. It is believed that Title I reading programs have been a major factor in affecting change in reading achievement among students in elementary schools in Virginia.

Exemplary Title III, ESEA, programs which included a reading component also were identified. (These projects are included in a Title III publication, *Profiles of ESEA Projects in Virginia.*) Details concerning the Title III projects may be obtained from the local school divisions.

At the adult level, enrollment in Adult Basic Education reading skills courses has risen steadily during the past five years. Enrollment between 1971 and 1975 totaled 71,620 persons.

While the data included in this report were being collected, several recommendations designed to improve reading in Virginia's public schools were offered. Among these recommendations are the following:

1. **English as a Second Language Program**
   Students should be placed with peer group, not placed according to English reading achievement level.

2. **Virginia Needs Assessment Study: Psychomotor Domain**
   a) Teacher education should be geared toward awareness and development of psychomotor functioning.
   b) Curriculum should be expanded to include psychomotor objectives.
   c) Further development of test instruments and investigation of the psychomotor domain should be carried out.

3. **Reading Courses Offered in Secondary Schools**
   a) Thirty-six percent of the secondary schools which include grade 6 should offer reading, and 40 percent of the secondary schools which include grade 7 should offer reading. For both grades the average enrollment per section should be reduced.
   b) Inasmuch as slightly over 30 percent of the students in grades 8-12 are reading two or more levels below their grade placement and only about one-half percent of the students are enrolled in reading courses, much greater effort should be made to provide formal instruction for students who are deficient in reading achievement. There also is a possibility that at least 30 percent of the high schools are not offering reading in grades 8-12 and should do so.

c) Although the average enrollment per section of reading is noticeably better in grades 8-12 than in grades 6 and 7, there is a noticeable need for reduction of class sizes in remedial reading courses.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As a Right To Read state, Virginia has made a commitment to give reading the highest priority and to concentrate funds, personnel, and efforts in assuring reading achievement for students and adults who cannot read at a level necessary for survival in society. The goal of the Right To Read effort is to eliminate illiteracy in Virginia by 1980.

The purpose of the paper has been to present a comprehensive picture of the status of reading in Virginia. The State Right To Read Task Force has received research data, reports, and other information which are relevant to the Right To Read effort. The findings of 18 research studies and reports have been presented.

Statewide test results for reading indicate that at the fourth-grade level, average reading scores for the past five years cluster around the 50th percentile level (average for the nation), while sixth-grade percentile scores have moved from the 42nd percentile in 1972 to the 48th percentile in 1974. In the latter year, the eighth-grade average reading score was at the 42nd percentile and the eleventh-grade at the 47th percentile. Although the average reading scores of Virginia students are creditable, there are great disparities among school divisions, as has been pointed out by the *Virginia Needs Assessment Study*. Also, reports of "average" scores do not reveal the precise number of illiterates at any grade level. Of the students enrolled in secondary school vocational education courses, from one-third to one-half have difficulty reading instructional materials related to their occupational preparation programs.

Reading scores of youth and adult offenders (ages 11-17) confined in Virginia Correctional Institutions in 1973-74 indicated that 77 to 90 percent of them performed one or more years below grade level in reading.

Precise information on adult reading achievement levels is not available. It was noted, however, that enrollment in Adult Basic Education reading skills courses increased from 1971 to 1975 and it is assumed that many of the enrollees learned to read through these classes. It is estimated that one of every 20 adults age 25 and over in Virginia is functionally illiterate.

Programs and activities conducted by the State Department of Education have been described. Also, reference has been made to Title I and Title III, ESEA, projects designed to improve achievement in reading and to studies which sought to determine the effectiveness of instructional

methodology. The studies and the recommendations included dealt with *English As a Second Language Programs* the Psychomotor Domain of the *Virginia Needs Assessment Study,* and *Reading Courses Offered in Secondary Schools.*

From the data presented, it is concluded that reading continues to be an area of major concern in Virginia's schools. Research evidence supports the claim that serious reading deficiencies can be corrected.

Table 1 presents a listing of the research studies and other types of information which were submitted for this paper, with the levels of the gathered data indicated. Upon analysis of the comprehensiveness of the data, it is evident that information about learner-oriented needs is available, but information on teacher-oriented needs or on how reading is taught within the state is limited. Questions such as (1) Are persons teaching reading adequately trained? and (2) Is there adequate leadership in reading instruction at the local level? are among those which require answers.

It is concluded that additional data relating to an assessment of teachers and the teaching of reading are needed if the goals of the Virginia Right To Read program are to be realized.

TABLE 1
A LISTING OF RESEARCH DATA/INFORMATION PER LEVEL OF TARGET POPULATION

SUBJECT	LEVELS														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	H. S. Voc.	Adult	Teacher
Commer. Mat. & Rdg. Achiev.	x														
Title I	x	x	x	x											
Title III, Va. Assess. I & II				x		x			x		x				
State Rdg. Test Scores				x		x		x			x				
Skill Develop. Prog.					x										
Effect Latin on Rdg. Achiev.					x	x									
Rdg. Instr. for Disadv.					x	x	x								
Youth Offenders					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Rem. Rdg. for Underachv.						x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Enroll. in Sec. Rdg. Courses						x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Eng. As a Second Lang.	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x			
Rdg. & Voc. Educ.													x		
ABE Rdg. Courses														x	
Educ. Attain.														x	
Effort Imprv. Rdg. Instr.															x

ABSTRACTS OF REPORTS

SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS
OF STATE RIGHT TO READ
TASK FORCE

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RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 1

Subject: Adult Basic Education in Virginia (Enrollment in Reading)

Source of Data: Adult Education Service
Division of Secondary Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1971-75

Target Population: Persons in age grouping of 16-24 years.

Description of Project or Study: An assessment was made of the available records housed in the state Adult Education Service.

Data Gathering Procedures: Statistics on enrollment of students in reading skills courses in Virginia, by levels (grades 1-4 and 5-8) are recorded by Adult Education Service.

Major Findings: Enrollment in ABE Reading Skills Courses

	FY 75	FY 74	FY 73	FY 72	FY 71	Totals
Total Students Served	17,766	15,007	15,140	10,332	13,375	71,620
Completion Level 1 Grades 1-4*	1,661	1,425	N/A	N/A	1,170	4,256
Completion Level 2 Grades 5-8	4,191	3,289	N/A	N/A	1,467	8,947
Learn to Read	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	694	694

According to the 1970 census the ABE target population was 1,442,498. This total is composed of persons 16 years of age or older who did not have a certificate of completion from secondary school and who were not enrolled in school.

Of the total, 165,139 were in the 16-24 age group.

*Reading skills are emphasized in the Adult Basic Education program, level I. Therefore, it can be assumed that those persons who have completed this level may have learned to read for the first time and all have improved their reading skills by one or more grade levels.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 2

Subject: Comparison of Educational Attainment of Total Virginia Population 25 years and older, 1960-70

Source of Data: 1970 Census, General Social and Economics Characteristics, Virginia

Date(s): 1960 and 1970

Target Population: Virginia population 25 years and older.

Description of Project or Study: A comparison of educational attainment was made of the total population, 25 years and older.

Data Gathering Procedures: U. S. Census data were reviewed.

Major Findings: A comparison of the educational attainment of the total population 25 years and older (Table 46, 1970 Census, General Social and Economi Characteristics, Virginia) shows the following:

	1970		1960	
	No.	% of total pop.	No.	% of total pop.
No school completed	39,708	1.6	55,356	2.7
1 to 4 years completed	147,707	6.0	218,164	10.5
Medium school yrs. completed	11.7		9.9	

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 3

Subject: Data Regarding Title I Reading Programs for Fiscal Years, 1971-75

Source of Data: Virginia Title I Office

Date(s): 1971-75

Target Population: Title I Students

Description of Project or Study: Data were gathered and analyzed on Title I programs in local school divisions in Virginia.

Data Gathering Procedures: Data were obtained from evaluation and statistical reports submitted by local school divisions. Some of the data were reported as estimates.

Major Findings:

Percent of Title I children who participated in a reading program ..... 72.

Number of children who have participated in reading program ..... Average; 75,128 students a year. Total for 5 years 377,564

Approximate amount of funds spent to improve reading $63,000,000

Approximate number of schools having Title I reading classes annually 850

Approximate number of teachers who have received special training in the teaching of reading (more than 5 hours) ..... 1,500 annually

Spent for Inservice training of reading teachers ..... $1,165,000 or an average of $233,000 annually

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 4

Subject: Diagnostic and Remedial Reading Programs for Middle School and High School Underachievers, Richmond

Source of Data: Division of Educational Research and Statistics State Department of Education

Date(s): 1973-74

Target Population: Grades 6-12, approximately 9,000 students

Description of Project or Study: The project conducted by the city of Richmond, under terms of Virginia Senate Bill 702, utilized a general instructional approach based on multiple methods of teaching the components of reading. This approach allowed each school to develop a program to meet the needs of its students. Teachers received inservice aid from reading specialists and were provided individual student diagnoses. Free college-level courses in teaching reading also were made available to project teachers.

Data Gathering Procedures: Students selected for the project were tested with the California Test of Basic Skills—Reading in September 1973, and in May 1974.

Major Findings: Results showed that, on the average, scores in reading achievement increased from pretesting to posttesting for each project school in each grade (6-12). When compared to expected average gains computed from the students' past achievement, average actual gains exceeded expected gains for both middle schools and high schools.

The Richmond City project was part of a larger program, *Diagnostic and Remedial Reading Program.* The following is taken from the Executive Report on this program, submitted September 1975.

Two-Year Comparison: The average grade equivalent scores for grades 7-12 on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) Reading Total Scores for the pretest (fall 1973) and the posttest (spring 1975) show that the average two-year gain for both middle school and high school was 1.4; the lowest gain was 1.1 for the ninth-grade students, and the highest gain was 1.6 for the tenth-grade students.

A comparison of the actual gains with the expected gains by grade for each school shows that for each grade level, there was a positive difference between the actual and the expected gains, i.e., the actual gains exceeded the expected gains. The differences ranged from 0.0 for the ninth-grade students to 0.5 for the tenth-grade students. It should be noted that there were positive differences for grades in each school with the exception of grade nine. In this case, three of the seven schools had negative differences, indicating that the expected gains exceeded the actual gains.

One-Year Comparison: The average grade equivalent scores for grades 7-12 on the CTBS Reading Total Scores for the pretest (spring 1974) and the posttest (spring 1975) showed that the one-year gain for both the middle school and the high school was 0.8; the lowest gain was 0.5 for the ninth-grade and the highest was 1.1 for the tenth-grade; thus, these data are consistent with those above in the two-year comparison.

A comparison of the actual and expected gains by grade for each school shows that there was a positive difference between the actual and expected

gain for each grade level, except for the ninth-grade. For that grade the difference was –0.1, indicating that the actual gain was less than expected. The highest difference in the mean gains was for the tenth-grade –0.5. Again it was noted that there was a positive gain at each level for most schools.

The following conclusions and recommendations were prepared by the Division of Educational Research and Statistics following the completion of the Senate Bill 702 projects.

Conclusions

A. The results of the projects support reseach evidence that serious reading deficiencies can be corrected.

B. The results indicate that to maximize the changes of success of a reading skills program, seven important conditions must be met:
   1. Firm commitment by the administration to the importance of correcting reading deficiencies and an administrative arrangement which will accomplish this;
   2. Assignment of thoroughly competent teachers who are committed to the improvement of reading;
   3. Sufficient time for reading instruction;
   4. A variety of reading materials appropriate for the students' instructional reading levels;
   5. A variety of reading materials appropriate for the students' independent reading levels;
   6. A classroom climate which stimulates interest in reading;
   7. Parental involvement in the improvement of reading.

C. Analysis of the data has yielded inconclusive evidence concerning the relative merits of various methods and materials.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 5

Subject: The Effects of a Commercially Prepared Reading Readiness Program on the Reading Achievement of Pupils in Grade One, 1967

Thomas E. Baines

Source of Data: Division of Educational Research and Statistics
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1967

Target Population: Grade 1, 101 randomly selected pupils in the experimental group and 101 in the control group.

Description of Project or Study: Research project conducted by local school division and sponsored by the Division of Educational Research and Statistics.

Data Gathering Procedures: Pretests used were Pintner-Cunningham Ability Tests, the Lee-Clarke Reading Readiness Tests, and the Metropolitain Readiness Tests, Form R. The posttest used was the Stanford Achievement Test, Primary 1, Form X.

Major Findings: Commercially prepared readiness materials appear to by an effective aid in reading instruction; however, they do not insure an adequate reading readiness program for pupils in grade one.

Experienced teachers demonstrated greater proficiency in using commercially prepared readiness materials. These teachers should be provided with such materials when desired.

While the reading achievement of pupils whose teachers were classified as inexperienced did not differ significantly in classes which used commercially prepared reading readiness materials and those that did not, additional studies should be made using a larger sampling of teachers.

Correlations of mental ability and readiness scores with reading achievement scores did not reveal any significant results. Any one of the three standardized tests administered might have been used with equal success in predicting pupil achievement in reading.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 6

Subject: Impact of Title I, ESEA, Reading Programs Upon Reading in Certain Divisions

Source of Data: Virginia Title I Office

Date(s): 1966-70

Target Population: Fourth-grade students in selected school divisions

Description of Project or Study: An analysis of test scores of eight school divisions was made to determine pupil gains in reading.

Data Gathering Procedures: A representative sample of school divisions used in a Title III, ESEA, needs assessment was used. Each fifth division listed was selected to be used in the sample. Reading achievement test scores on all fourth-grade students in the division were analyzed.

Major Findings: Many variables may be involved in changing the reading ability of students in a school division. Also, Title I reading programs usually affect only about 15 percent of the children, who are those with the lowest learning potential. It is believed, however, that Title I has been a major factor in affecting change in reading and the result below are reasonably valid.

Results of reading achievement tests given to all fourth-grade students in the division 1966 through 1970:

	YEAR	GRADE EQUIV. IN READING
WYTHE COUNTY	1966	4.9
	1967	5.1
	1968	5.1
	1969	5.2
	1970	5.2
BEDFORD COUNTY	1968	4.5
	1969	5.3
	1970	4.7
WINCHESTER CITY	1966	4.8
	1967	4.8
	1968	5.5
	1969	5.4
	1970	5.8
FAUQUIER COUNTY	1966	4.7
	1967	4.7
	1968	5.1
	1969	4.8
	1970	4.8
WARREN COUNTY	1965	4.6
	1966	5.1
	1967	5.1
	1968	4.9
	1969	5.1
	1970	5.1

NORFOLK CITY	1966	4.6
	1967	4.6
* The confusion of reassignment of many pupils to other schools is considered significant.	1968	4.6
	1969	4.5*
FRANKLIN COUNTY	1966	4.3
	1967	4.6
	1968	4.5
	1969	4.6
	1970	4.6
	1971	4.7
FREDERICKSBURG CITY	1966	5.0
	1967	5.1
	1968	5.2
	1969	5.3
	1970	5.1

An analysis of the scores above indicates that the Title I reading programs are having a favorable impact upon the reading of the entire school system.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 7

Subject: The Impact of Title I, ESEA, Upon Reading in Virginia

Source of Data: Virginia Title I Office

Date(s): 1968-72

Target Population: Title I eligible students (economically and educationally deprived).

Description of Project or Study: During the school years 1968-69 through 1971-72, an analysis was made of the results of reading achievement tests in ten school divisions.

Data Gathering Procedures: Title I regulations require that each Title I program be measured objectively, using pre- and posttests. Nearly 100% of the LEAs use standardized tests to measure reading progress. The selection and administration of the specific test was the responsibility of the LEA involved.

Major Findings:
During 1968-69 through 1971-72 an analysis was made of the results of achievement tests in 10 school divisions which included cities and counties in all sections of the state. The results were as follows:

	1967-68	1969-70	1970-71	1971-72
Number tested	3,894	2,586	4,053	5,381
Mean gain by months for each month of instruction	1.29	1.35	1.3	1.1

In the 1972-73 and 1973-74 school sessions all students who had taken the Metropolitan and California achievement tests (pretest and posttest) were used to determine the success of the Title I, ESEA, reading and mathematics program. The results were calculated by machine records using the pretest and posttest results reported by LEAs in their annual evaluation reports. The results were as follows:

READING

Year	Mean Gain in Months Per Month of Instruction	Number Students
1972-73	.98	27,966
1973-74	1.15	27,857

The mean gain per month of Title I instruction for the five years, 1969-70 through 1973-74 was 1.17 months.

This gain is particularly significant in light of the fact that students who are selected for Title I classes are educationally deprived and are usually a year or more behind their peers. Comparable data suggest that these students had a mean gain in grade equivalent of .68 months per month of instruction in the years preceeding Title I instruction, indicating that the Title I instructon accelerated learning by more than four months during the school year.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 8

Subject: Reading Courses Offered in Virginia Secondary Schools and Enrollments, 1974-75

Source of Data: English Service
Division of Secondary Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1974-75

Target Population: Secondary School Students

Description of Project or Study: Secondary schools were surveyed for course offerings in reading, by grade level and enrollments.

Data Gathering Procedures: Data gathered by English Service.

Major Findings: As per the following tabulation.

READING COURSES IN VIRGINIA SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND ENROLLMENTS, 1974-75

Level	Course	No. Schools Offering	No. Schools not Offering	Percent of Schools Offering	No. Pupils Enrolled	No. Pupils not Enrolled	Percent of Pupils Enrolled	No. Sections Offered	Average Enrollment per Section
Junior High and Combined Schools	Reading, Grade 6	27	48	64%	3,948	9,651	29%	185	21
	Reading, Grade 7	77	114	60%	10,150	49,077	17%	519	20
Senior High and Combined Schools	Developmental Reading, Grades 8-12	48	434	11%	3,272	389,304	1%	231	14
	Remedial Reading, Grades 8-12	99	383	26%	8,136	384,440	2%	599	14
	Reading Improvement Grades 8-12	129	353	36%	9,413	383,413	2%	644	14

Upon the basis of this chart, the following recommendations are made:

1. Thirty-six percent of the secondary schools which include grade 6 should offer reading, and 40 percent of the secondary schools which include grade 7 should offer reading. For both grades the average enrollment per section should be reduced.
2. Inasmuch as slightly over 30 percent of the students in grades 8-12 are reading two or more levels below their grade placement and only about one-half percent of the students are enrolled in reading courses, much greater effort should be made to provide formal instruction for students who are deficient in reading achievement. There also is a possibility that at least 30 percent of the high schools are not offering reading in grades 8-12 and should do so.
3. Although the average enrollment per section of reading is noticeably better in grades 8-12 than in grades 6 and 7, there is a noticeable need for reduction of class sizes in remedial reading courses.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 9

Subject: Reading Scores of Youth and Adult Offenders Confined in Virginia Correctional Institutions, 1973-75

Source of Data: Rehabilitative School Aut ·rv
Commonwealth of Virgini

Date(s): 1973-75

Target Population: Youth offenders confined in Virginia correctional institutions, age 11-17.

Description of Project or Study: Youths entering the Reception and Diagnostic Center for Children upon commitment to the Department of Corrections are assessed by the Mobile Psychiatric Clinic. Data were gathered and analyzed regarding the reading achievement of the youth offenders.

Data Gathering Procedures: The Gates-MacGinitie comprehension and vocabulary tests were administered to all subjects as part of the intake assessment interpreted by the Mobile Psychiatric Clinic. Not *all* children committed, however, were given these tests.

Major Findings: 1973-74: Test results indicate that 77 percent to 90 percent of the students performed one level or more below grade level in oral readi g, vocabulary, and reading comprehension.

1/74-12/74: Test results indicate that children 12 years old and younger are as far as two years behind their grade level in reading when they are committed. As the children get older they also fall further behind in their grade level. By the time they are 17 years old and older they are as far as five years behind their grade level when they are committed.

1974-75: Results of test show:

1. All students read below acceptable performance level;
2. One-half the students read one to three years below the acceptable reading level;
3. One-third read at a level three or more grades below the acceptable reading level.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 10

Subject: Reading Score Trends from 1970-75, State Testing Program

Source of Data: Testing Service, Division of Program Evaluation
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1970-75

Target Population: Students in grades 4, 6, 8, and 11 participate in the Standardized Testing Program on a statewide basis. Approximately 325,000 students participate in the testing program.

Description of Project or Study: A study was made of Science Research Associates Achievement test results to determine trends in reading scores within the state from 1970 to 1975.

Data Gathering Procedures: Results from SRA Tests were analyzed and tabulated by staff members of the Testing Service.

Major Findings: Contained in the table below are the national percentile equivalents of average reading scores in Virginia during the period 1970 to 1975. Percentiles marked with an asterisk (*) are Sequential Tests of Educational Progress (STEP). All other tests are Science Research Associates (SRA).

School Years	Grade Levels				
	4th	6th	8th	9th	11th
1970-71	53	—	—	45*	50*
1971-72	51	—	—	41*	48*
1972-73	42	42	—	43*	45*
1973-74	46	43	40	—	42
1974-75	51	48	42	—	47

During the past five years the fluctuations in reading scores generally have been insignificant. Scores had a slight tendency to decline during the first half of the five-year period and to rise during the last half; however, the only significant change was the drop from 51 to 42 in fourth-grade scores from 1971-72 to 1972-73. This score was raised to the 46th percentile in 1973-74 and returned to its 1971-72 level in 1974-75.

Reading achievement scores compared favorably with ability scores throughout the five-year period. Ability scores were available for comparison with 16 of the 18 reading achievement scores in the table above. In every comparison, reading achievement percentile equalled or exceeded ability percentiles.

Following are statistics reflecting the number and percentage of eighth- and eleventh-grade pupils who are reading two or more grade levels below their grade placement according to 1974-75 state test results:

Grade	Number	Percentage
8	28,907	33.1%
11	21,119	31.8%

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 11

Subject: Report on Efforts To Improve Reading Instruction in Virginia

Source of Data: Division of Elementary Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1972-75

Target Population: Selected Educators and Lay Persons

Description of Project or Study: A listing of efforts by Division

of Elementary Education and others to improve the quality of instruction in reading.

Data Gathering Procedures: Staff members of the division gathered and reviewed information from available documents, printed materials, and records.

Major Findings:

1. In 1972 the Board of Education adopted revised teacher certification regulations which included provisions for certifying for the first time reading specialists and teachers of reading. This action is encouraging the revision of teacher-education programs to insure quality programs of higher education for all persons who have major responsibilities as reading specialists and teachers of reading.

2. The Board of Education has appointed a state supervisory person to assume leadership responsibilities in reading instruction in the elementary schools. Two additional persons have been added to the staff of the Division of Elementary Education to render consultative services in teaching to local school personnel.

3. Since 1933, the State Department of Education has sponsored an annual reading conference to provide opportunities for inservice education of classroom teachers. Principals and other administrators participate in these conferences.

4. Two school divisions have received funds for implementing special reading programs in coordination with the national Right to Read effort.

5. A tutor-trainer workshop was held to assist persons who are interested in volunteering their services to help children and adults read more effectively. The two-day workshop provided training for persons who, if asked by schools and groups, would render tutoring service in reading. The participants were equipped to return to their localities to plan and organize school-based or community-based tutoring programs.

The workshop was limited to 150 applicants, of which 100 were trained as tutor-trainers and 50 as tutor-coordinators. It was suggested that each community send a team of people to the workshop. A regular team consisted of two tutor-trainers and one tutor-coordinator. A "short" team consisted of one tutor-trainer and one tutor-coordinator. The potential tutor-trainers were persons who previously had some experience in teaching reading in elementary grades. They were taught how to use the center's tutor-training materials. Tutor-coordinators were persons who had some administrative skill, possessed knowledge of the community and its resources, and had experience in working with public and community

organizations. They were taught how to recruit, organize, and give other support to the volunteer service.

6. In October 1973, as a result of widespread concern and interest on the part of parents, laymen, civic leaders, educators, and other interested citizens, a Governor's Conference on Reading was held in Richmond, Va. The major purposes of the conference were to focus on the importance of reading and to inform the public of the status of reading in the public schools of the Commonwealth. It was recommended that this conference should be followed by a similar conference in each locality.

7. As an outgrowth of the Governor's Conference on Reading, regional conferences on reading were held during October and November 1974, in each of the seven planning districts of the Commonwealth. As a result of planning sessions, which were held in each district, conferences were conducted in Tappahannock, Abingdon, Radford, Marshall, Tabb, Lynchburg, and Petersburg. The theme of each conference was "Reading Improvement: A Cooperative Community Commitment." The purposes of these conferences were to focus attention on the progress being made in reading and to provide a forum whereby parents, civic leaders, persons in business and industry, and professional educators might jointly explore ideas and suggestions as to how reading improvement among children and adults may be achieved. Attendants at each conference included two-thirds lay citizens and one-third professional educators. Following the regional conferences, local conferences on reading were held in many cities, towns, and counties in the state.

8. A Language Arts Guide, with major emphasis on reading, has been developed. The guide was designed to serve as a resource for faculty groups and other professionals as they plan and organize for instruction in reading.

9. Language Arts personnel of the State Department of Education provide ongoing visitation and consultative services in reading. Upon request, assistance is provided in: planning local reading guides; planning and conducting teacher inservice training; program planning and implementing; and reviewing applications for proposed local and federal projects in reading.

10. One of the measurable objectives approved by the Board of Education as part of The Standards of Quality for the Public Schools of Virginia for the 1974-76 biennium states:

> "The average achievement level of the student population in reading and mathematics as measured by standardized tests will equal or exceed the average ability level of the student population as measured by scholastic tests."

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 12

Subject: Status Report on English as a Second Language and the Foreign Language Problem in Virginia

Source of Data: Foreign Language Service
Division of Secondary Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1974-75

Target Population: Foreign-speaking students in Virginia's Schools

Description of Project or Study: A survey was conducted relative to programs of *English as a Second Language* available in the public schools.

Data Gathering Procedures: A questionnaire was sent to school divisions requesting information about the extent to which *English As a Second Language* (ESL) programs are in operation. Twelve school divisions (all in the eastern part of the state) responded.

Major Findings:

1. Approximately 3,350 students in Virginia are involved in ESL; 1,915 of these are Indochinese students who arrived in the U.S. in 1975.
2. Twelve school divisions in the State provide *English as a Second Language* programs. They are Falls Church, Henrico County, Prince William County, Norfolk, Hampton, Fairfax County, Chesapeake, Newport News, Virginia Beach, Richmond, Alexandria, and Arlington County.
3. Students spend only part of their day with a teacher who specializes in ESL. Programs offered range from K through grade 12. Programs assist students in developing English skills as rapidly as possible and are removed from ESL as soon as they can function effectively in English. Reading is stressed from first day of enrollment.
4. Students experience problems in learning to read English only if they have had problems reading in their native language. Generally, ESL students are highly motivated.

Recommendations and Needs:

1. Teaching materials are a problem, but this is improving. Use of lower-grade materials is not meeting needs. Too much new vocabulary is presented too quickly.
2. Students should be placed with their peer group, not placed according to English reading achievement level.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 13

Subject: Strategies for Improving Basic Instruction for the Disadvantaged, Norfolk City

Source of Data: Division of Educational Research and Statistics
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1973-74

Target Population: Grades 5-7, approximately 3,587 students

Description of Project or Study: The project was conducted under terms of Virginia Senate Bill 702. The project focused on achievement in reading comprehension and mathematics and on attitude toward reading. Inservice training in the reading components of the project resulted in several strategies being developed to reinforce strengths and eliminate weaknesses in reading. Increased knowledge of language by instructional personnel was stressed.

Data Gathering Procedures: Achievement in reading and mathematics was measured by Science Research Associates standardized subtests. Attitude toward reading was measured with appropriate instruments.

Major Findings: Results showed that, on the average, project students made gains from pretesting to posttesting in both reading and mathematics achievement. Gains also were demonstrated on some objective-referenced reading/language arts tests. Evidence was inconclusive concerning average gains on standardized reading and mathematics achievement tests for project students compared with non-project students. No difference was shown between project and non-project students in attitude toward reading.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 14

Subject: A Study of the Effectiveness of Latin Instruction in Increasing the Reading Skills of Pupils in Grades Five and Six, 1974
Jean W. Payne

Source of Data: Division of Educational Research and Statistics
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1974

Target Population: Grades 5 and 6, selected pupils, 100 pupils each in the experimental group and in the control group.

Description of Project or Study: Research project conducted by local school division and sponsored by the Division of Educational Research and Statistics.

Data Gathering Procedures: Pre- and posttesting the first year included the SRA Assessment Survey Reading Subtests and the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests. The second year the Slosson Oral Reading Test was used for pre- and posttesting in addition to the SRA and Gates-MacGinitie. Techniques of informal evaluation were utilized.

Major Findings: An analysis of the pretest data indicates that the experimental and control groups were well matched. The only statistically significant difference in posttest results was on the Slosson Oral Reading Test. These results show that both the experimental groups scored higher than the control groups.

Collecting more reliable pretest and posttest assessments of reading skills and expanding the sample size might provide a better measurement of the effects of Latin instruction. The results of the initial study, however, are not sufficiently convincing to recommend that the school system institute a Latin curriculum in the elementary schools for the purpose of increasing the English reading skills of students.

The excellent curricular materials which were developed during the two-year study are special benefits derived from the project. These materials comprise a series of units. Within each unit are numbered class activities and, where applicable, correspondingly numbered work sheets, games, puzzles, copies of transparencies, illustrations and tests.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 15

Subject: Supplemental Skill Development Program

Source of Data: Division of Elementary Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1974-75

Target Population: Selected underachieving fifth- and sixth-grade pupils; 17,000 in 1974-75 and 30,000 in 1975-76.

Description of Project or Study: Individualized instruction was provided for selected pupils in reading. Instruction was based on 30 selected reading objectives, utilizing the mastery concept of learning. Eighty percent of the pupils in the fifth-grade continued in the program in the sixth-grade. The project supports the Standards of Quality objective that pupils shall score at a level commensurate with tested ability in reading and mathematics.

Data Gathering Procedures: Westinghouse Learning Corporation SCORE Test (criterion-referenced)
Pretest: Form 1, all fifth-grade participants
Posttest: Form 2, all fifth-grade participants
Posttest: Form 3, all sixth-grade participants

Science Research Associates Reading Test (norm-referenced)
Pretest: 10 percent random sample, fifth-grade
Posttest: 10 percent random sample, fifth-grade

Major Findings: Pupil gains on criterion-referenced tests were reported in terms of percent of objectives mastered on a statewide basis. In reading, the average pupil over the state entered the program with a total mastery of 36 percent of the 30 reading objectives (10.8 objectives). At the end of the year, the average pupil exhibited mastery of 62 percent of the objectives (18.6 objectives), showing a gain of 26 percentage points. If this rate of learning can continue for those pupils participating in the program for a second year at the sixth-grade level, it is anticipated that the remaining objectives specified for the program will be achieved. A final report on the program will be available in August 1976.

Results on SRA random sampling at fifth-grade level are not available at this reportin

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 16

Subject: Title III, ESEA, Reading Projects Conducted in Virginia's Schools

Source of Data: State Title III, ESEA, Office

Date(s): 1970-74

Target Population: Students at all levels, preschool – grade 12; teachers; administrators; parents

Description of Project or Study: Exemplary Title III programs containing a reading component were identified by seaching through "Profiles of ESEA Projects in Virginia." Title III provides seed money for school systems to plan and develop new programs. Local funding to continue successful Title III projects is anticipated.

Data Gathering Procedures: "Profiles" presents a resume of each Title III project. A yearly on-site evaluation of each project is an important function of the State Title III Office. A "Project Concensus Evaluation Report" is available for each project.

Major Findings: Findings on various projects may be obtained from appropriate local school division superintendents.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 17

Subject: The Virginia Educational Needs Assessment Study

Source of Data: State Title III, ESEA, Office

Date(s): 1970-75

Target Population: Random sample of pupils in grades 4, 6, 9, and 12.

Description of Project or Study: The study is divided into two phases. The University of Virginia undertook assessment of cognitive and affective domains. Glen Haven Achievement Center assessed psychomotor deficiencies.

The prime concern for both contractors were learner-oriented needs as reflected in both sets of objectives. The University of Virginia sought to:

1. Examine the aspirations of and for elementary and secondary school pupils in Virginia;
2. Examine achievements related to these goals;
3. Determine the relative severity of educational needs;
4. Provide a basis for periodic review of future educational needs; and

5. Convey to lay and professional communities an awareness of the values of, and procedures for, effective assessment of educational needs.

The Glen Haven Achievement Center used four questions as the formal basis for their study:

1. What is the psychomotor domain?
2. What measures are available to assess psychomotor abilities?
3. What, if any, are the needs of Virginia school children within this domain?
4. What are the implications for curriculum and teacher education?

Data Gathering Procedures: As per the following summary.

Major Findings:

SUMMARY OF VIRGINIA EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT: COGNITIVE DOMAIN

Regional comparisons were made on the basis of the statewide totals, which were compared with national norms. Regionally, mean levels of verbal I.Q. were highest in Northern Virginia and lowest in the Tidewater and Southside areas. Southside Virginia and Tidewater Virginia fell decisively below statewide totals in all 12 cognitive clusters. The defined low abilities in the Southside and Tidewater regions have added significance in the context of low cognitive means in these two regions, as do the defined high abilities in Northern Virginia in the context of high cognitive means in this region.

Needs of Reading

Reading continues to be a curriculum area of major concern. Only 67.3 percent of the reading objectives were measured by the test items instead of the arbitrary, though dependable, standard of 75 percent. Nevertheless, those reading objectives measured by a sufficiently large number of items to warrant differential comparisons were investigated to determine specific reading needs by regions as well as ranking according to successful attainment by the total state sample.

SUMMARY OF VIRGINIA EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT: AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

The Virginia Educational Needs Assessment Study was based on the concept that the school and classroom, as a social system, provide the

setting within which the self-esteem of the learner is expressed in three output areas: learner-oriented behavior in the cognitive domain, learner-oriented behavior in the affective domain, and the interrelationships of these cognitive and affective behaviors. These behavioral outputs were considered indicators of self-perceptions, verbally expressed behaviors, and manifest behaviors which the learner originally possessed on entry to the school and classroom.

Summarizing the affective status and needs assessment, the conclusions drawn from the self-ratings of student behavior by simple and sophisticated analyses revealed wide regional, grade, and statewide consensus of desired and actual behavior. Teacher ratings of students affective behavior and student self-ratings agreed very closely, except in grade 11.
Data for assessing needs were obtained by using the Virginia Affective Assessment Questionnaire (VAAQ). Items on the questionnaire were divided into four behavioral categories: (1) citizenship; (2) school, education and learning; (3) interpersonal relationships; and (4) self-esteem.

SUMMARY OF VIRGINIA EDUCATIONAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT: PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN

This study yielded considerable information about the nature of the psychomotor domain, data regarding instruments of measurement, and incidence figures for the school population. The study also verified the validity of the principal psychomotor measurement instrument, the Purdue Perceptual Motor Survey which is used to assess performance in eight separate areas of psychomotor functioning.

The study revealed a wide range of deficiencies in psychomotor functioning in all grade levels examined (K-4). As anticipated, incidence of these deficiencies was greatest among the special education group, regardless of age, and among primary school children. As age and grade level increased, incidence of psychomotor deficiencies decreased. The continued decrease in the percentages of psychomotor deficiencies, however, was generally not observed in grade 4, and in fact, some upward trends were noted. Such a pattern may indicate that for a large number of children, continued improvement of psychomotor skills will not occur without intervention. In kindergarten, the percentage of children failing one or more psychomotor skill areas was 53 percent; in the fourth grade this number was 44 percent. The significance of the problem is evident when 17 percent of the fourth-grade children had deficit scores on occular control and 15 percent were deficient in visual motor control—two areas alone which can easily affect efficiency in reading and writing.

Recommendations: (1) teacher education geared toward awareness and development of psychomotor functioning; (2) expansion of curriculum to

include psychomotor objectives; and (3) further development of test instruments and investigation of the prychomotor domain.

RIGHT-TO-READ
Project/Data Abstract No. 18

Subject: Vocational Education Students—Status of Reading

Source of Data: Division of Vocational Education
State Department of Education

Date(s): 1974-75

Target Population: In the public schools in Virginia, during 1974-75, 284,358 students were enrolled in vocational education programs. Of this number 24,104 were in special programs for students who cannot develop job-entry skills in regular vocational education programs, and 3,661 were in special programs for handicapped students (EMR's).

Description of Project or Study: While it has been demonstrated that the greatest hindrance to a student's development of job-entry skills is related to deficiencies in communication and computational skills, no formal assessment has been made of the level of reading of vocational students in Virginia on a statewide basis. Many schools make such assessments locally.

Data Gathering Procedures: An informal assessment was made of existing practices in public schools in the state.

Major Findings: Empirical evidence would indicate that from one-third to one-half of the vocational students have difficulty in reading the instructional materials related to their occupational preparation programs. The problem is two-fold. One relates to the technical nature of the subject matter and the use of a variety of resource materials written primarily for employed persons (vocational education uses few textbooks), the other relates to the large number of poor readers enrolled in vocational education classes.

The problem persists despite the efforts of vocational educators in a number of program fields to assist their students to read technical materials and to obtain resource materials on a variety of reading levels. Inservice education in remedial reading using vocational education materials has been conducted for vocational teachers from time to time. Where possible, persons trained in assisting students with reading difficulties are employed.

Many of these students also are receiving remedial instruction in reading through their general education program. These efforts have met with some success.

Special education teachers assist EMR's with reading problems, but in vocational education programs for these students, reading is generally not a major skill requirement.